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First Acquaintance with the Protectorate

The people are, as I was quick to realise after I had seen and spoken to the tribesman at the Khormaksar races, independent and virile, and later I was to find that they did not lack a sense of humour. In the Highlands they dress, even to this day, in blue cotton kilts which reach to the knee, leaving the upper part of the body bare, except for the vegetable oil and blue dye with which they rub their skin as a protection against the sun in summer and the cold in winter. The kilt is held in place by a leather cartridge belt which in turn supports a dagger, generally with a silver scabbard. A rifle and a pair of leather sandals complete the picture, except in the Colony where rifles and daggers, except for the privileged few, have to be surrendered to authority on entrance, and may not be carried on the person. In the Colony, too, and indeed in the more developed areas of the Protectorate, the blue kilt has given place to brightly coloured kilts made from silk and cotton cloth imported from Indonesia and India, and the blue dye and oil have been replaced by shirts and coats, and indeed, by collars and ties and trousers when the owners have come to this country either on business or for pleasure.

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